

Palmer Woods Historic District

General boundaries: Woodward Avenue, Strathcona Drive, and Seven Mile Road.

Local

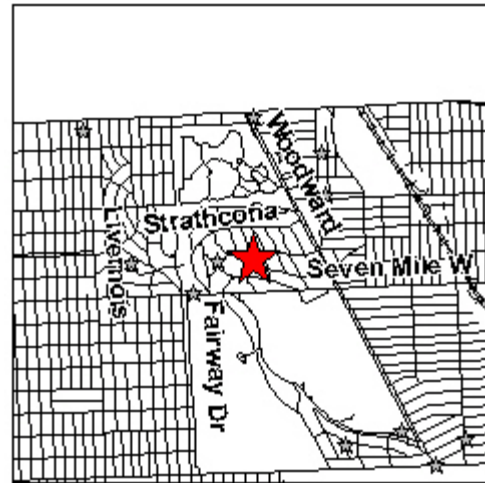
State

State Marker

National ✓ 8/11/83



1600 block of Lincolnshire streetscape.



Historic overview:

Palmer Woods is significant as a carefully planned residential subdivision that strove to take advantage of the natural beauty of the terrain. Designed by landscape architect Ossian Cole Simonds, Palmer Woods received the Michigan Horticultural Society's Award of Merit in 1938 for being the finest platted subdivision in Michigan. Palmer Woods also contains the work of internationally known architects such as Frank Lloyd Wright, Minoru Yamasaki, and Maginnis & Walsh; as well as many of Detroit's talented architects. In addition, it was home to many prominent Detroiters.

Palmer Woods is named for Senator Thomas Palmer, who in 1893 made a generous gift to the City of Detroit of over 100 acres of farmland for use as a public park. A portion of the area was purchased for development in 1915. Landscape Architect Ossian Cole Simonds laid out Palmer Woods' streets as curving avenues, a break in the rigid gridiron tradition of Detroit. Building lots are irregular in shape, another non-traditional aspect. As a result of Simonds' work, the lots in Palmer Woods are all unique, but as a whole the area is beautifully harmonious.

The development of Palmer Woods coincided with the rapid expansion of Detroit's automobile industry. Many executives from the auto industry and other prominent companies built their homes in Palmer Woods. A few of many examples are the presidents of GM, Chrysler Corp., and Chevrolet Motor Company, Mayor Edward Jefferies, and several Archbishops of the Archdiocese of Detroit.

